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“Primary elections in Iowa,” and “Tax administration in Iowa.” The state historical society in Iowa has taken over the work of the legislative reference department and the present volume is the result of legislative recognition and support which came to the society from the general assembly in 1913.

Two main lines of thought are presented in this work, the one included under the general caption of political science and the other quite wholly sociological. Under the first head the general subject is given as the “Reorganization of state government in Iowa.” Under this follow chapters on certain specific subjects as applied to conditions in Iowa: home rule, direct legislation, equal suffrage, selection and removal of public officials, and the merit system. This is in itself a generous program of reform and the various subjects are handled with a technical skill and in a scientific manner that is exceedingly refreshing to the average layman.

In the field of sociology three chapters are presented covering the subjects in their bearing on the state: social legislation, child labor and poor relief. These chapters present the problem and make certain definite proposals for reform. The program is necessarily one largely preventative rather than remedial since in so new a community no very deep seated social evils are yet beginning to manifest themselves.

Mr. Shambaugh is to be congratulated upon his new departure. He has broken ground and has opened up some new fields of investigation for the state historical societies of the middle west. No longer is it necessary to limit their researches to the conventional lines laid down elsewhere. Any problem that is alive is hereafter open to study by such a corps of thinkers and writers as can be drafted in to assist. The practical application of academic theory to actual life has widened the scope of our civic responsibility. No state-supported institutions need longer contend for mere existence. Out of the fullness of their opportunity each one may contribute to the general well-being. Every dollar of taxation may thus demonstrably bring back full return and interest. Each piece of work like this of Mr. Shambaugh's still further confirms the wisdom of uniting at every possible point our state and local public service and the higher institutions of learning. It is a further demonstration of the advantages to be derived from accordinng the fullest academic freedom to those who serve the public in college and university.

Early economic conditions and the development of agriculture in Minnesota. By Edward Van Dyke Robinson, Ph.D., professor of economics, University of Minnesota. [The University of Minnesota studies in the social sciences, no. 3] (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1915. 306 p. \$1.69)

Mr. Robinson, whose death a few weeks ago came as a shock to his

friends and indeed to all workers in the same field, first began the preparation of the volume under consideration with the idea of preparing a statistical atlas showing the development of agriculture in Minnesota. His intention was largely to present in statistical form, with an extended series of maps and graphs, a report which would show the distribution as to time and place of the various agricultural industries. The purpose was to furnish the information in such a way as to be of service particularly to the farmers of the state of Minnesota, to teachers of agriculture and to those interested in economic history and general economics, but more particularly to students in the field of rural economics.

From time to time the scope of the work was enlarged until the complete report which finally took form has been presented in a volume of 306 large pages.

Mr. Robinson seems to have realized more than most students in this field the importance of special intensive local studies. Having followed his work for eight years, I recall how months, indeed years of time would be spent on an area not greater than one state or on a period of time not greater than a half century or on a subject which would be considered hardly more than a topic in a chapter. The work under consideration is an illustration of his judgment of the importance of this method of procedure. It can almost be looked upon as a source book for the different groups of people noted above. It represents the final conclusion of years of study for the one state of Minnesota. The state being very young, the period of time covered is hardly a century. In subject matter he has limited himself to the specific subject of agriculture, bringing in, however, other lines of development or other facts necessary to interpret his subject properly.

The introduction notes that as the work advanced "it soon became clear that a mere presentation of the facts in graphic form, without interpretation, would be of relatively limited advantage; and having once undertaken the task of interpretation, it became necessary to seek explanations in many directions. In the first place, since all extractive industries are largely controlled by physical environment, a preliminary survey of topography, soil and climate was clearly indispensable." The writer of this review spent some three or four years working on a doctor's thesis which covered a very small section of Minnesota, and from some familiarity with the problem is satisfied that Mr. Robinson has done a remarkably fine piece of work, both in the presentation of the facts as to topography, soils, climate, etc., and in the interpretation and explanation which he has presented.

In the compilation of statistics preliminary to the making of maps and graphs, the author found that the census reports coming as they do at ten-year intervals were far from satisfactory for two reasons: in the first

place, during the early years of the state the statistics were very defective, and in the second place, the movements between census periods were so great in many cases that it was necessary to make extensive researches through local statistical reports and papers in order to understand at all the real movements. The author found so many important developments that he makes some very valuable suggestions in the matter of intercensal statistical reports. The reviewer was in charge of the last national census of agriculture, and in view of his experience, very strongly supports the conclusions reached by Mr. Robinson.

An immense amount of work was done on the making of the maps, especially the establishing of county boundaries, and, so far as the reviewer's knowledge goes, there is presented in this work the best and by far the most complete study of the development of the present geographical organization of the state from the standpoint of political units which has been worked out up to date.

The main outline of the table of contents gives the best idea of the scope of the volume, and from a careful comparison of this analytical table of contents with the subject matter of the volume, the reviewer feels that all important details are made accessible and available by proper mention in the contents. This statement is made in view of the fact that many source books, while they contain masses of valuable material, do not have proper tables of contents or indexes. The first twenty-six pages are devoted to physical features and climate of Minnesota. Chapter II extends over twelve pages and is devoted to the early travel, trade and transportation, while chapter III extends over seventeen pages and is devoted to the settlement and development of pioneer agriculture from 1838 to 1860. This brings us to the period of rapid development of agriculture in this state. Chapter IV is devoted to specialized wheat farming from 1860-1880; nearly fifty pages are given to this feature. In chapter V the development of diversified farming during the two decades, 1880-1900, is carefully covered in sixty-five pages. In order that this development might be clearly understood the state is divided into very small sections with illustrations from individual counties. Chapter VI, which covers the last decade, presents in detail the recent tendencies in agriculture. During this decade a veritable revolution is presented, with wheat—the principal crop—falling off in importance about fifty percent.

On pages 237-239 is found a complete list of maps and diagrams, statistical tables in context, and statistical tables in appendix. Pages 240-242 are devoted to bibliography. The remaining forty-three pages, representing months of labor, present detailed statistical tables. Here will be found practically all statistics available pertaining to agriculture in the state of Minnesota from the earliest days when the first fact became

available to the most recent compilations. The tables not only contain original data but hundreds of percentages, averages, etc., and are given not only for the state as a whole but also for individual counties, for the entire period covered.

In the judgment of the reviewer, this is the most comprehensive piece of work of its kind dealing with an American state; it stands as a fitting monument to Mr. Robinson.

JOHN R. COULTER

Collections of the Minnesota historical society. Volume xv. (St. Paul: Minnesota historical society, 1915. 872 p. \$2.50)

The present volume is a type of *Historical collections* which somewhat contradicts its name. Instead of being a collection of documents as one would expect, it comprises papers and addresses presented before the Minnesota historical society during the past six years, together with memorials of deceased members. With a few exceptions, the papers tend to be of a popular nature. The first paper, which is the most pretentious and scholarly in the volume, relates to "Railroad legislation in Minnesota, 1849 to 1875," by Rasmus S. Saby. This appeared as a separate several years ago; it is a doctoral dissertation containing a detailed history of the origin and early struggles of the railroads of the state, based entirely upon original sources. Mr. Saby's essay is an acceptable contribution to the growing literature in the field of modern industrial history and in the field of state political history. The treatment is unnecessarily long,—many of the facts which impede the narrative could well have been subjected to footnotes or appendix.

Closely allied to the foregoing study is "The five million loan" by William Watts Folwell, which deals with the attempt of the state to secure railroad construction by a loan of credit, and the ultimately successful struggle to prevent repudiation. Then follows a history of "The beginning of railroad building in Minnesota," by John H. Randall, which is, as the title suggests, a history of the construction of the first railroad in the state.

An interesting topic in the volume from the viewpoint of the critical student and the casual reader is "The Kensington rune stone," a report, controversial in its nature, made to the Minnesota historical society by its museum committee. The stone in question, inscribed with runic characters, was found on a farm in Minnesota and purported to chronicle a visit to Minnesota by the Northmen as early as 1362. At the time of the discovery the record was declared fraudulent. In 1908, however, the agitation was revived and resulted in the favorable report printed herewith. In 1911 the stone was taken abroad where it was subjected to criticism by expert Scandinavian runologists and linguists, who branded